

Customer Service Onnections

A publication of Saint Paul Regional Water Services

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Sustainable Saint Paul

SPRWS takes a role in the city's initiative

To Serve You Better

Bill payment options provide one that's right for you

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Customer saves money using tap water

Editor's note: The following is a reprint of an email we received through our web site on Aug. 6 from a very satisfied customer.

I've been meaning to write and tell you how you've been saving me money...

I've been drinking bottled waters for many years, because I had some unpleasant experiences in the past with the taste of tap water. I generally bought gallons of water with the groceries each week, at prices ranging from \$0.89 to \$1.25 per gallon.

Some time ago, I read the water quality report that you sent. I also saw, either in your newsletter or elsewhere, an article about the costs of bottling and shipping water. After reading that article, and after reading about new filtration methods and seeing the ratings, I decided to try an experiment. Instead of buying new gallons of water, I filled my water jugs from the tap and put them in the refrigerator. I honestly couldn't tell the difference, once they were chilled. I most often

drink chilled water, either from frozen plastic mugs or from sports bottles that I've partially filled and then frozen. The taste is not quite so good once the water has warmed to room temperature.

I figure that drinking tap water has saved me \$5 to \$7 a week during the past three months, or \$60 to \$84.

During this summer's hot spell, I've been drinking almost a gallon of water a day. (I walk a lot and I'm serious about staying hydrated.) I figure that drinking tap water has saved me \$5 to \$7 a week during the past three months, or \$60 to \$84. Put that against the \$20.90 on my current 3-month bill, and I'm coming out way ahead!

My bill is so low because I don't have a pool or hot tub, and I don't water the lawn (though I'm quite generous with the tomatoes).

Thanks for improving water quality and saving me money.

Ellen

SPRWS works with DNR to remove mussels

Saint Paul Regional Water Services is working with the Minnesota Department

of Natural Resources to stop the spread of zebra mussels from the Mississippi River to the chain of lakes we use as our source water.

Already determined by the DNR to exist in two lakes near Brainerd, and potentially the

Mississippi River from Brainerd down to the Twin Cities, zebra mussels are an exotic species with no natural enemies. They threaten native wildlife, upset ecosystems, and once established into colonies, the mussels can damage

steel, wood, and concrete

structures submerged in water.
They also can clog water intake valves and conduits, reducing flow

Zebra mussels are capable of traveling as adults via boats, motors, trailers, and aquatic plants, staying alive for several days out of the water. They more often spread during the

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To Serve You Better

Saint Paul Regional Water Services offers **several payment options**. If you need help to decide which method is best for you, just give us a call. A Customer Service Representative will be happy to discuss each option in detail.



Direct payment plan. Never write another check for your water services, and never again worry about paying your bill on time. Join nearly 10,000 other SPRWS customers and have the amount due deducted electronically from your checking or savings account. You'll still receive a statement, but it will indicate which date each payment will be deducted from your account.



Drop boxes. For next-day processing, use the McCarrons Center drop box, located at 1900 Rice Street (open 24 hours). For 48-hour processing, the downtown drop box is located at Saint Paul City Hall, 15 Kellogg Blvd. (8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; visitors must pass through security.) Checks or money orders only, please.



In-person transactions. To pay your bills in person, walk into the McCarrons Center office, 1900 Rice Street, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. We accept checks, money orders, cash, and can make credit arrangements.

SPRWS takes role in Sustainable St. Paul

Sustainable Saint Paul looks at how development and the long-term health of the environment need to be balanced. Saint Paul considers itself a leader and innovator in the field of environmental preservation and sustainable development; it is rated No. 4 out of the top 10 Green Cities in the U.S.

Representatives from Sustainable Saint Paul toured the SPRWS McCarrons Center July 18, as part of an ongoing effort to tour sustainable facilities. Hammel, Green, and Abrahamson, Inc., the architectural firm that designed the new buildings at McCarrons Center, presented information about sustainable design features of the administration, warehouse and vehicle maintenance buildings. The group then toured the water treatment plant.

SPRWS has a long history of awareness of environmental concerns. Since its inception, the utility has taken a long-term view of our assets, land, and watersheds. In the early 1900s, we planted extensive forests to stop erosion. We continue to maintain those forests.

In building our new facilities in 2004, we installed energy-efficient and energy-saving features like efficient interior lighting, natural delighting, low-E-glazing, and highly efficient mechanical systems. We re-examined how we use power at the plant, and now reduce energy use during peak hours and generate our own electricity.

We have also installed storm water infiltration basins and native plantings to transfer storm water from



Members of Sustainable Saint Paul (L to R):
Margaret Egan, Council Research; E. Tim Carl,
American Institute of Architects, Hammel,
Green, and Abrahamson, Inc.; Kurt Schulz and
Margot Fehrenbacher, Planning and Economic
Development; Duane Kroll, Financial Services
Office-Contract and Analysis Services; Mike
Michaud, Public Works-Real Estate; led by John
F. Blackstone, SPRWS.

the parking lot to the adjacent basins. Native plants like grass, wildflowers, trees, and shrubs have reduced maintenance costs and improved biodiversity. In the distribution system, we have a leak detection unit that finds leaks to reduce and eliminate wasted water. We also have a conservation-based water rate structure that discourages excessive water usage during the summer months.

SPRWS and the cities of
Minneapolis and Saint Cloud formed
the Upper Mississippi River Source
Water Protection Project to protect
our primary ground water source the
Mississippi River. We have been a
member of the Vadnais Lake Area
Water Management Organization
(VLAWMO) since its inception. We
have worked with VLAWMO to restore
wetlands in and around Lambert Creek.

To find out more about Sustainable Saint Paul, check out the city's web site at http://www.stpaul.gov/initiatives/sustainable/

Utility works to stop the spread of zebra

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larvae stage, known as veligers. These microscopic organisms can be found in bilge water, live wells, bait buckets, and engine cooling systems. In rivers, they are carried passively downstream, following the water flow.

Minnesota law prohibits the transport of infested waters to non-infested waters. This is where SPRWS is affected. We must now treat the water we draw in from the

Mississippi River as it flows into our conduit system, injecting liquid copper sulfate at a continuous dosage of 0.25 parts per million to kill the veligers before they can reach Charley Lake. We began this treatment process in July of 2006.

In addition, the utility tests Charley Lake and Lake Pleasant for both veligers and adult zebra mussels. Testing is conducted twice a month for veligers at the inlet culvert area at Charley Lake, and once a month in Pleasant Lake at the inlet from Charley to Sucker lakes. Samplers are set up in Charley and Pleasant lakes to monitor the possible spread of adults.

While water transportation is but one way zebra mussels can travel, the utility is doing its part to stop the spread of this biological invader.